



LLCd Symposium.
SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS.

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Brief Bio: R. Amritavalli is Professor of Linguistics at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. Her research interests are theoretical linguistics and first and second language acquisition. She has worked to teach English using print, audio and video media. She was Chair of the Focus Group on English (a part of NCF (National Curriculum Framework) 2005, NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training)); served as Chief Advisor to the NCERT's English textbooks, and was an invited member of the National Knowledge Commission's Working group on languages. She has edited a course on Communication Skills in English for IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2008), published creative writing in English in Indian Literature (SahityaAkademi) and KavyaBharati (SCILET, Study Centre for Indian Literature in English and Translation), books for children in English, and a translation from Kannada ('Venkatiga's wife' by MastiVenkatesalyengar, Yatra One: Writings from the Indian Subcontinent, eds. Alok Bhalla, NirmalVerma & U.R. Anantamurthy (1993: Indus /Harper Collins)). Her scholarly publications include Language as a Dynamic Text (1999), English in Deprived Circumstances: Maximising Learner Autonomy (2007) and the chapter on India (co-authored with K.A. Jayaseelan) in Language and National Identity in Asia (ed. Andrew Simpson), (2007, Oxford). She currently edits The EFL Journal.

Theme: Morphology, semantics and syntax

Title: Multilingual syntactico-semantic access during acquisition and in proficient language use

Abstract: I discuss evidence that (i) the acquisition of syntax in the 2nd language shows a "noun advantage" as in infant L1 acquisition, arguing for a linguistic rather than cognitive basis for the noun advantage; (ii) morphological deficits in Specific Language Impairment manifest across the 1st and 2nd languages; and (iii) multilingual children spontaneously draw on all their linguistic resources. The evidence supports and augments a current assumption that both/all lexicons are semantically activated during lexical selection in bi/multilingual speech production (Costa, Caramazza, & Sebastián-Gallés, 2000). This model sees lexical items from the "non-intended" language as "intrusions" in less proficient bi/multilingual speech. However, in the "bilingual joke" (Amritavalli and Upendran 1993; also in Swann, forthcoming), the intentional use of two or more languages presents interesting questions about proficient bilinguals' simultaneous use of two syntactic and phonological systems as well as lexicons. E.g., for the English – Hindi joke below to work, the string A keela is dually parsed as a code-mixed English-Hindi string a keela ('banana'), and a single Hindi word akeela 'alone'. Crucially, a is analysed simultaneously as the English article and the first syllable of a Hindi noun.

Q: What did one banana say to another?

A: A keela hũũ mũ

A (English, article) banana (Hindi) am I (Hindi)
Literal meaning: I am a banana. Intended pun: 'I'm alone.'